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(54) **Fusion process for conduit**

(57) Disclosed is a method and apparatus for use in a fusion process for conduit. The method includes the steps of: removably positioning a first terminal edge (18) of a first conduit portion (10) with a first terminal edge (20) of a second conduit portion (12); facing the terminal edges (18, 20) of the first conduit portion (10) and the second conduit portion (12); aligning the terminal edges (18, 20) of the first conduit portion (10) and the second conduit portion (12); melting at least a portion of the ter-

minal edges (18, 20) of the first conduit portion (10) and the second conduit portion (12); engaging the melted terminal edge of the first conduit portion (10) with the melted terminal edge of the second conduit portion (12); maintaining pressure between the engaged terminal edges, thereby creating a fused joint area (22); and removing at least a portion of the resultant external bead (24) extending around the fused joint area (22). A fusion apparatus (14) for employing this method is also disclosed.

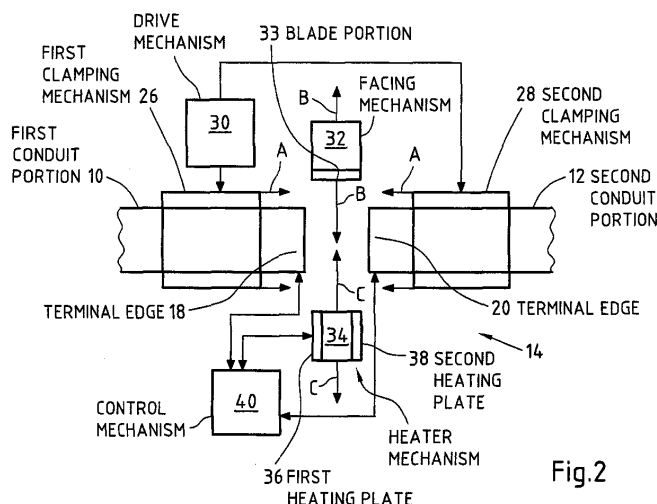


Fig.2



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 11 16 4772

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 16 February 2012	Examiner Schneider, Dominik
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing claims for which payment was due.

☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

☒ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

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☐ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

☐ The present supplementary European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims (Rule 164 (1) EPC).



**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number
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The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-8

methods of determining pressure

2. claims: 9-13

removing the welding bead

3. claims: 14, 15

plate heating

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82

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